

GASTSTROSCOPY

You have been referred for a gastroscopy (also called an endoscopy or oesophago-gastro-duodenoscopy (OGD)). This procedure allows the clinician to look directly at the lining of the oesophagus (gullet), stomach and part of the duodenum. These three structures form the first part of the gut and are called the upper gut.

The procedure is performed with a long flexible scope which is placed through the mouth and manipulated down the upper gut.

The procedure can be performed with or without sedation.

Sedation

Sedation is not an anaesthetic as you will be breathing for yourself during the procedure. The sedative is given into a vein in your arm, after spraying the back of your throat to make it numb. There are advantages and disadvantages to having sedation.

Advantages

- You are unaware of the procedure
- You will have no memory of the procedure

Disadvantages

- The effects of the sedation may last up to 24 hours and there are restrictions on what you should do after the procedure because of this (see below).

Without Sedation

Without sedation the endoscope is passed only after spraying the back of your mouth and throat with a local anaesthetic to make this area numb.

Advantages

- After the local anaesthetic has worn off (see below) you have none of the lasting effects of sedation and none of the limitations on your activities.

Disadvantages

- You are aware of the entire procedure and will have some sensation of the scope moving through the mouth. Some people may find this uncomfortable or it may make them feel panicky. To overcome this it is important to distract yourself by concentrating on your breathing during the procedure. The doctor will also talk to you during the procedure and this will help to distract you.
- If you can not tolerate the scope and do not want the alternative of sedation the procedure may have to be abandoned before completion.

Once you have decided whether you wish to have sedation you will be asked to sign a consent form. A small tube is placed in a vein in the arm and the throat spray is given. The spray can sometimes taste a little bitter. You will be asked to turn onto your left side and a guard is placed between your teeth to stop you biting the scope. The sedation is then given into the tube in your arm if you have elected for this.

Discharge Information

Sedation

Following your gastroscopy small amounts of sedative will remain in your body for up to 24 hours. During this period, although you may feel wide awake, you may still be under the influence of the sedation. Your concentration, co-ordination and memory may be impaired and it is possible you may feel light headed or faint. It is for this reason that for 24 hours after your procedure you;

- Must not drive a car or any motorised transport or ride a bicycle
- Must not operate machinery
- Must be more aware of the greater effects of alcohol
- Must be aware of using electrical appliances such as cookers
- Must avoid making important decisions or signing important documents as your reasoning may be impaired by the sedative

Throat Spray / Local anaesthetic in the throat

A local anaesthetic spray is used to numb the lining of your throat and upper airway prior to your procedure. This takes approximately 20 minutes to wear off.

Therefore you should not eat or drink for 20 minutes following your procedure to prevent scalds or inhalation.

You may have a sore throat for up to 24 hours after the procedure due to the insertion of the gastroscopy. This will wear off but throat lozenges may help. You may feel bloated from air introduced into your stomach in order to see all its lining. It may help to sit upright, walk around, and take warm drinks or peppermint tea or sweets. This should help the wind to pass.

Pain relieving tablets, such as those you would take for a simple headache, may be taken at home as needed. Please read the instructions on the packet for the correct dosage and timing. If you develop any persistent unexpected pain please contact the hospital endoscopy department, your GP, NHS direct or if necessary come to the Accident and Emergency Department at Kingston Hospital.